

REMARKS

The Official Action dated April 6, 2004 has been carefully considered. Accordingly, the changes presented herewith, taken with the following remarks, are believed sufficient to place the present application in condition for allowance. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 11, 13-17, 19-32, 36 and 37 have been cancelled to expedite prosecution of the patent application. Since these changes do not involve any introduction of new matter, entry is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

In the Official Action, the Examiner objected to the abstract of the disclosure as not covering a full description of the technical disclosure was not descriptive. The present amendment amends the abstract to more fully describe the entire claimed invention and technical disclosure. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Official Action, the Examiner objected to the specification for minor informalities. The specification has been amended as recommended by the Examiner to provide clarity and consistency. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Official Action, claims 10, 11, 14-17, 21-24, 29-30 and 36-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicants' admitted prior art in view of Kobayashi (US Patent No. 6,199,122) and Noll (US Patent No. 5,544,334) taken together. Claims 10-11, 14-17, 21-24, 29-30 and 36-37 have been cancelled, thereby mooting the Examiner's rejection. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

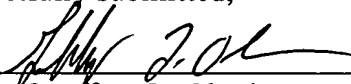
Claims 13, 19-20, 25-28 and 31-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicants' admitted prior art in view of Kobayashi and Noll, taken together and further in view of Weber et al. (US Patent No. 5,133,060). Claims 13, 19-20, 25-28 and 31-32 have been cancelled, thereby mooting the Examiner's rejection. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Finally, Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 1-9, 34 and 35 are allowable.

It is believed that the above represents a complete response to the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 and places the present application in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and an early allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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